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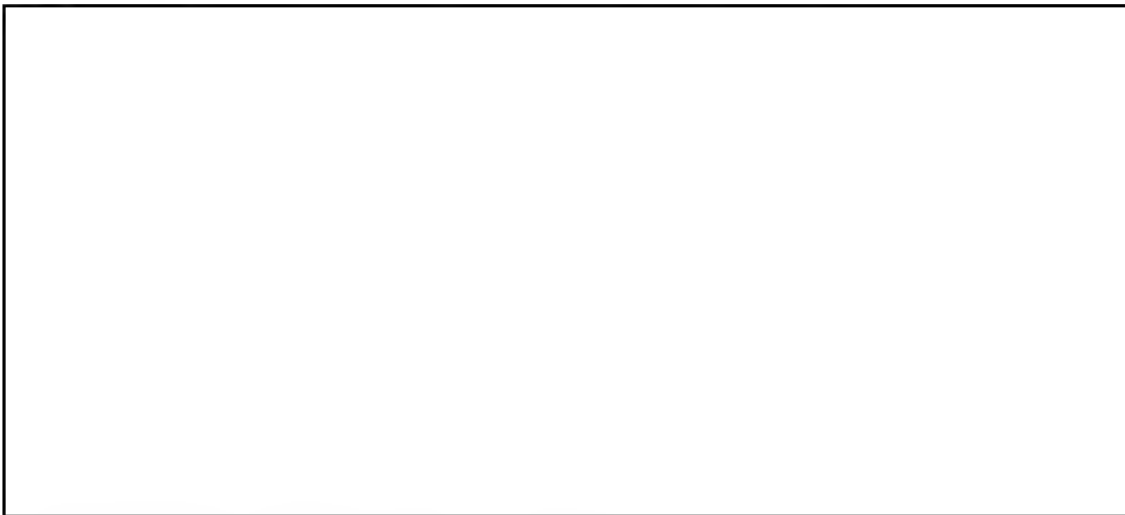
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CAMBODIA: Matak may accept the vice-presidency.
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BOLIVIA: Cocaine bust (Page 7)

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CAMBODIA: Sirik Matak is considering accepting President Lon Nol's latest offer of the vice-presidency.

25X1 Matak has turned down earlier offers because he believed that the office would be powerless, but this time Lon Nol seemed to be at pains to make the job sound attractive.

Lon Nol promised unqualified support and said that the vice-president would in effect serve as "president delegate." He even offered Matak the authority to pick a new cabinet and prime minister, but stated that his current offer would be the last that he would tender. The vice-presidential appointment is to be made immediately following the National Assembly elections on 3 September.

25X1 Matak made no commitments,

25X1 In view of his previous tribulations in serving as Lon Nol's deputy, Matak probably harbors reservations concerning the worth of Lon Nol's promises to delegate authority. Nonetheless, the vice-presidency would give Matak a significant advantage over potential rivals in a bid for power in the event that Lon Nol dies or is incapacitated by another stroke.

25X1 Matak's tactical problem is that an immediate acceptance might undermine his efforts to build his newly organized Republican Party as an independent power base and to strengthen his standing among students, intellectuals, and other anti-Lon Nol elements. In order to court their support, Matak recently has sought to put some visible political distance between himself and his old friend. He may try to defer any final decision until shortly before the upcoming elections.

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NOTES

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BOLIVIA: The recently established Narcotics Bureau last weekend discovered a cocaine factory in southwest Oruro Province, near the Chilean border, and seized about 100 pounds of cocaine paste, as well as other raw materials and equipment. This successful Bolivian initiative marks a small but encouraging first step in the fight against the cocaine traffic. Much of the cocaine reaching the US market is refined from coca leaves grown in Bolivia, and the laboratories are a relatively vulnerable stage in the process. [REDACTED]

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